



WAPSD

Wyoming Advisory Panel for Students with Disabilities

June 11, 2020, 9:00 a.m., Zoom Teleconference Meeting

Attendance: Rachel Crawford, Erin Swilling, Ann Armel, Christine Bullinger, Shannon Cranmore, Jennifer Duncan, Kathy Escobedo, Shelley Hamel, Julie Heil, Davey Hough, Nicky Hulme, Dallas Myers, Ashley Robertson, Margee Robertson, Anedra Selley, Hayley Speiser, Pam Zamora

Guests: Deana Smith, WDE; Kascinda Fleming, WDE; Susan Shipley, WDE; Michelle Aldrich, WDE; Bart Lyman, BOCES V; Josh Anderson, BOCES V

MOTIONS

Administrative:

It was moved by Julie Heil and seconded by Shannon Cranmore that the March Meeting Minutes be approved as written. Motion carried unanimously.

It was moved by Erin Swilling and seconded by _____ to nominate Nicky Hulme as the Chair-Elect for the 2020-2021 Panel Year. Motion carried unanimously.

Policy:

Welcome/Opening: Chairman Crawford called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. She opened the meeting for public comment. Dr. Michelle Aldrich with WDE announced a training for paraprofessionals and job coaches on September 22 and 23rd around working with special education students around job skills.

Secretary Announcements

Secretary Jennifer Duncan updated the panel on updates occurring to the WAPSD page of the WDE website. Things have been updated and the status will continue. Margee Robertson asked about empty positions on the panel that require representation.

Chair Report – Old and New Business, Rachel Crawford

Chairman Crawford noted that spring has been very busy in terms of teaching and providing services for students with disabilities. This is her last meeting as Chairman and she thanked the committee; she has learned a lot and grown professionally from the knowledge she has gained serving on the Panel thus far. She has gained a much deeper respect for the Special Education teachers and how they were creative in providing services via virtual learning, she also noted that there are discrepancies that she would like the panel to keep bringing to the Legislature and to Superintendent Balow.

Committee Reports

Rachel reviewed the strategic plan that was developed for the committees that are on the Panel and would like to set the action plan for the upcoming year for them. The Committees are Membership, Legislative, Public Relations, and Executive Committee. Erin Swilling had sent a previous email about

doing some interim work on the committees that can report back during the WAPSD meetings. Swilling reviewed the process for receiving applications and interviewing potential Panel members. Nicky Hulme noted that she has previous experience in PR with and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Ombudsman program, they are a valuable resource for finding services around the state, with complete confidentiality. She is going to speak with them about presenting to the WAPSD Panel. Margee Robertson recommended a future action item for the Panel to approve a document on the webpage that would have a list of resources, it would be a living document that would be updated frequently. This would be an important part of the parent engagement process. Christine Bullinger also recommended that these resources, once they are pooled, could be sent to the Wyoming 211 system, which another clearinghouse of resources for families around the state.

Legislative Update

Shelley Hamel, Chief of Academics, WDE, provided a recap of legislative action that may be upcoming. On June 24-25 there is a Select Committee on School Finance Recalibration will meet in Cheyenne. They will cover everything regarding the Basket of Goods including historical finance and school finance litigation as well as moving forward with K-12 funding. Picus Oden will be doing the recalibration work, as they have previously. This meeting will be streamed on LSO's You Tube page. The Joint Interim Education Meeting occurred the previous week, many subjects were covered that were aimed at dealing with the upcoming recalibration. Wyoming statute has paid very little attention to addressing dyslexia. There was a manual created, but never released. A new document was created that was pared down to make it more usable and directly related to the statute directing literacy. Districts have provided feedback stating that the document addresses dyslexia, almost to the exclusion of other reading disabilities. A small group of resources were provided in the document, those will be removed as the WDE cannot even appear to be promoting any particular resource. Several representatives are working on creating this document and vary from national level literacy experts to members from districts around the state. Hamel would like to have this Panel provide feedback on this document. Also a report on the effects COVID-19 was given; the effects of telehealth; and an update on meals that have been provided around the state. There are over 250 sites are providing meals around the state; had the WDE not been able to get a USDA grant waiver; only 100 sites would've been able to provide meals – the additional 150 sites are in 16 different communities.

Hamel updated the Panel on the Adaptive Learning plans submitted by the districts to assure districts to provide general and special education services without being face to face with students. The teachers and districts rose to the occasion to make the final quarter of the year meaningful in light of the COVID-19 closing of schools. As the upcoming school year approaches, a WDE work group will provide a Smart Start plan outlining a template that districts can use to reopen, whether completely in person, a hybrid or completely online. It will address all areas: transportation, business, administration, health, communication, nutrition. Erin Swilling had several questions around how the work group was addressing special education needs during the upcoming school year. Hamel noted that districts are being advised to make recommendations based on their local health and needs so that the services provided are more aligned to the needs of the school communities.

HB 174, Kindergarten Readiness was also discussed. Does this give the schools the authority to tell parents their children are not ready for kindergarten? If child is 5 by September 15, they can attend kindergarten, no matter what their IEP states.

SPED Director/WDE Updates

Margee Robertson wanted to overview the Special Education Programs Division, the team members and responsibilities. The Division receives the 611 Funds from IDEA, the Division has oversight and general supervision over the funds that are distributed to districts, another part of the mandate is for the Division to provide Technical Assistance, Professional Development and Monitoring of districts. Within the Division are three teams: Vision Outreach, led by Leslie Van Orman, which provides literacy training for children with visual impairments; vision services are also provided from birth to death in terms of talking books, services and training; Deaf and Hard of Hearing Outreach, headed by Billie Wortham, provide services to districts who have deaf and hard of hearing students, assisting with IEP's and other areas of service, oversight of certification of Educational Interpreters; the third team is the Continuous Improvement Systems team, headed by Susan Shipley, which will also include the IDEA General Supervision, Dispute Resolution, and Data – all of which drive the professional development and technical assistance around the state. Monitoring, the General Supervision under ESSA, has 4 districts under a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) and 9 districts under the Results Driven Accountability (RDA), which is now RBAS – Results Based Accountability & Support, which incorporates more support and professional development into the process along with technical assistance. Robertson reviewed each team's membership and responsibilities. Robertson also explained the training that will replace the annual WAVE Conference that is traditionally held at the end of July. There will be sessions presented throughout the school year that educators and administrators can log into that will cover a variety of legal and other special education subjects to provide professional development throughout the year. The IDEA grant that the state receives that is then distributed to districts as they provide special education services require that the state provide certain services to districts, which these positions within the WDE fulfill.

Wy-TOPP Accommodations Update

Kascinda Fleming updated the Panel on the 1% threshold for districts across the state. For the 2018-2019 school year, there were 13 districts over the threshold, but they were anticipated to be under for this upcoming testing window; there were 19 districts that were over the threshold that anticipate still being over by the time the testing window is open. With the assessment being cancelled this year due to COVID-19, the 1% threshold information from 2018-19 will be used. Felming has been working with the Assessment team to create a check list to assist all the statewide assessments accommodation language. They hope to have the checklist ready to go at the beginning of August so that IEP teams can use them. Learner Characteristic Inventory is something that is completed prior to the assessment, the information comes off of the IEP, and the team wants to make it a more comprehensive process for IEP teams to gather that information. She is building a capacity building team along with Ann Armel with DVR to bring together Vocational Rehabilitation, Career Technical Education and Special Education to make the transition from high school for students to be better prepared for continued education and the work force.

619 Updates/WDE Data Updates

Susan Shipley updated the panel on Part B IDEA Indicators Status Update for students with disabilities in grades K-12. There are 17 Indicators identified by OSEP that are the data points that are measured to show whether districts are meeting students' needs and that students are progressing towards graduation.

DDE Eligibility Guidance

Gail Eisenhauer updated the Panel on WDE Guidance Documents that have been created, most in the last year. Documents are available in several areas including Technical Assistance; Director's Academy;

FAQ's; and Comprehensive Reference Documents. These were created so that whoever is answering the question that is being asked has a consistent basis for answering and is based on statutorily requirements and policy that is established.

BHD Update

Kathy Escobedo provided an update to the Panel regarding the Behavioral Health Division Early Intervention and Education Program. The main concern with budget cuts is that this program is entirely funded with state funds and the Governor has requested a 10% cut by July 1, 2020 and a 20% cut by December 31, 2020 to all state budgets. These cuts will undoubtedly have an effect on early childhood programs offered through BHD and Child Development Centers around the state. Staff reductions at the CDC's have been the result of budget cuts in the past, which will in turn impact the delivery of services for pre-K children.

Election of Officers 2020-2021

The election of officers for the Panel for the upcoming 2020-2021 year were conducted. Erin Swilling nominated Nicky Hulme as the chair elect. The Panel agreed unanimously.

Advice, Recommendations and Action Steps

Nicky Hulme will contact the Substance & Mental Health Ombudsman program regarding a presentation to the Panel.

WDE will continue to compile resources for parents and teachers in multiple formats and share with other clearing house organizations for dissemination.

Connect with the Legislature regarding SPED Funding

Letter to Governor and Director of Health regarding funding for Behavioral Health Division

It was moved by Ann Armel and seconded by Kathy Escobedo to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Tentative Upcoming Dates/Locations – May change due to COVID-19 Health Guidelines

September 8, 2020 in Casper

December 8, 2020 via Zoom

March 9, 2021 in Casper

June 8-9, 2021 in Casper

*All meetings will be from 9:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. at Natrona County School District #1, Fairdale Room unless otherwise noted.